

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
OVERVIEW OF THE PRIVACY ACT OF 1974**

2015 Edition

Preface

The “Overview of the Privacy Act of 1974,” prepared by the Department of Justice’s Office of Privacy and Civil Liberties (OPCL), is a discussion of the Privacy Act’s disclosure prohibition, its access and amendment provisions, and its agency recordkeeping requirements. Tracking the provisions of the Act itself, the Overview provides reference to and legal analysis of court decisions interpreting the Act’s provisions. The Overview is not intended to provide policy guidance, as that role statutorily rests with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), 5 U.S.C. § 552a(v). However, where OMB has issued policy guidance on particular provisions of the Act, citation to such guidance is provided in the Overview. The 2015 edition of the Overview was issued electronically and sent for publication in July 2015 and includes cases through May 2014. The Overview is scheduled to be revised again in 2016.

OPCL is very pleased to provide this updated revision of the Overview, and could not have done so without the commitment of OPCL’s dedicated staff. OPCL would particularly like to recognize: the written and editorial contributions of OPCL Senior Counsel Alex Wood, who carefully shepherded the publication of this edition from beginning to end; the written and editorial assistance of its volunteer interns Yasmin Emrani, Meryl Kanofsky, Kaiya Lyons, Craig Wesoly, Hannah Mayer, Danielle Prongay, and Kelly Singleton; the management of the publication process by its program specialist Pamela A. Moyer; and last, but certainly not least, the invaluable written and editorial contributions of its former Director, Joo Y. Chung, who led this edition to completion before her departure from the Department of Justice. This 2015 edition of the Overview is specifically dedicated to her. Without the valuable assistance of these individuals, the completion of this endeavor would not have been possible.

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